Japan: to follow the global EMI hegemony, or consider multilingualism?

Kristie Sage

Abstract

Throughout this paper, the discussion of the internationalization of Higher Education (HE) in Japan is examined from its relatively immediate past and specifically, a present local application. Global hegemony of this sector is pushing rapid adoption of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) models by elite universities as they respond to its demands. Since uncontrollable factors are at play in regards to domestic, regional and global issues, the objectives which are being implemented at present by elite universities in conjunction with government initiatives are questioned as to the extent to which they serve as the best indicators for achievement of internationalization. For those universities not selected as the core universities for internationalization funding, should they model their own internationalization progress on them nonetheless? Or should they assume less proactive positions towards internationalization, since it is only more elite universities who are in the global game of competing for international students who are mobile? The relevance of multilingualism is evaluated verses that of EMI, under the umbrella of concern by some academics who worry whether government financial incentives will relegate the complex multifaceted international demands of the future to less effective short term, reactive strategies; hence surrendering to current global hegemonic model trends.
Key words: HE, internationalization, elite, government initiatives, global hegemony, EMI, multilingualism

Introduction

This paper aims to document and give a brief critique of some key arguments, detailing the moves made by Japan towards the internationalization of HE in the context of the assertion that a global hegemony is emerging in this sector. Primarily the source material, references, secondary data and academic arguments have been taken from the June 2009 special volume of the Journal of Studies in International Education (JSIE), dedicated to issues surrounding the internationalization of HE in Japan. In this special volume, with limited exception, the articles are written by Japanese academics, who are embedded in Japanese universities and quantitative data has been collected from primary sources. The articles raise significant issues which discuss cornerstone developments in regards to internationalization and HE in Japan, and the larger role to play in the global hegemony of EMI for HE institutions.

The articles featured were in the following order: 1) An overview of internationalization and review of subsequent articles in the special volume - “The Past, Present and Future of Internationalization in Japan” by Akira Ninomiya of Hiroshima University, Jane Knight of the University of Toronto and Aya Watanabe of Kumamoto University; 2) Examining the perspective of Japanese universities and internationalization in “Japanese University Leaders’ Perceptions of the Internationalization: The Role of Government in Review and Support” by Akiyoshi Yonezawa of Tohoku University, Hiroko Akiba of Hitsotsubashi University and Daisuke Hirouchi of Hiroshima
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University; 3) The changes experienced by the academic profession in Japan’s internationalization of HE from 1992-2007 by Futao Huang of Hiroshima University in “The Internationalization of the Academic Profession in Japan: A Quantative Perspective”; 4) Mayumi Ishikawa of Osaka University provides analysis of the emergence and impact of dominant models of non-Western, non-English language universities in Japan in “University Rankings, Global Models, and Emerging Hegemony: Critical Analysis from Japan”; 5) “The contribution of ‘Study Abroad’ Programs to Japanese Internationalization” is an examination of survey results by Takako Asaoka of Saga University and Jun Yano of Monash University to ascertain characteristics of Study Abroad programs undertaken by Japanese students and their feedback on them, such as factors which discourage them from participating, and suggestions from university staff which could promote study abroad programs; and 6) Akira Kuwamura of Yamagata University in “The Challenges of Increasing Capacity and Diversity in Japanese Higher Education Through Proactive Recruitment Strategies”, explores internationalization of HE trends and challenges expected by Japanese HE as they attempt to increase capacity and diversity on campus and in program offerings.

Although the topics of Japanese study abroad students and the internationalization of the academic staff addressed by this special volume are necessary contributions towards Japan’s HE internationalization, they will not provide the basis for the main argument of this paper. Instead, the respective positions of Japan, in terms of the global hegemony of HE internationalization models, which requisite EMI and the expected ramifications of this in the future are discussed. To do so, the internationalization process of Japan has, albeit condensed, been
documented. In addition, for comparison purposes, scant reference has been made to the European Union (EU) and other Asian countries in order to ascertain more of a global awareness of their respective stances on EMI in light of HE internationalization goals. Japan is evaluated, based on its idiosyncrasies, namely in terms of demographics, multilingualism and recent government initiatives which have given significant financial assistance to elite universities to internationalize - one of the main objectives being increasing degree courses solely taught and awarded in English. These constitute several points of concern, compelling the argument of whether placing EMI on a pedestal is in fact a blind reactive stance to the maintenance of universal global hegemony models in HE which support it and thus override the more proactive stance that perhaps should be taken regarding multilingualism in recognition of regional and local trends.

1. Internationalization

This paper touches on the internationalization of HE in Japan in 2009 and why it is a relevant discussion, now more than ever. In the special volume of JSIE, June 2009, dedicated to Japan, some criticism of the way Japan has tackled it has been lamented by Kuwamura (2009:190) - to trace back to the late 1800s - asserting that the approaches have been “mostly government-led and reactive rather than pro-active.” The main impetus behind this movement had been to gain direct knowledge from Western nations through foreign educators’ employment in Japan. Due to this approach, Ebuchi (1997) (cited in Kuwamura, 2009:190) argues that from this time to the mid-1960s the eagerness of Japan to “absorb isolated knowledge and skills” from abroad was prioritized over “mutual understanding and cooperation across cultures” and resulted in the engenderment of “self-centered and closed
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behavioral patterns”.

Ishikawa (2009:160) while on one hand supports this line of reasoning, is somewhat more diplomatic; describing the modern history of Japan in relation to the HE sector as “self-sustained”, maintaining a “national language-based higher education model with a stratification mechanism to select and produce future leaders and professionals”. In addition, the author comments that prior to the last decade, there was little need for Japan to associate itself with “Western higher education power domains” and holding a degree from a Western university was not that relevant for one’s mobility up the nation’s social ladder (Ishikawa, 2009: 160). In fact, Huang (2006) states that it was not until OECD suggestions in 1971, that the Japanese government sought to even consider the internationalization of its HE sector, evidenced by the 1983 and 2008 initiatives for increasing international student numbers.

Globalization it is maintained by Coleman (2006:1), not only influences the economics but also the language use of HE. In reality, the term ‘international students’ tends nowadays to not mean: “…the ‘organized mobility’ of mutual exchanges ... [rather] ... the ‘spontaneous mobility’ of fee-paying individuals. And in today’s HE market, internationalization is necessary even to attract domestic students (Kurtain, 2004:31, as cited by Coleman, 2006:5).” Global 30 (Core Universities for Internationalization) is a fitting example of Japan’s approach to staying abreast. The notions pursued however, warrant further discussion.
2. Global hegemony and its impact on the HE institutions of Japan

Ishikawa (2009:160) analyses the impact in Japan of dominant world-class university models; criticizing that: “powerful global models appear to help cultivate a new quest for elite education overseas, create a new internationalized national hierarchy, affect the balance between the natural sciences/engineering, and humanities/social sciences faculties within institutions, and even devalue research in the national language”. Nonetheless, and despite such criticisms, this academic accepts that Japanese research universities must rise to global model challenges and initiate the fundamental changes required.

Even still, Ishikawa (2009) questions whether the correct mechanisms are in place to ensure global surveys which are carried out for rankings are conducted in a sound scientific manner, devoid of manipulation. Hence, concerns regarding Western journalist manipulation, expressed as: “the manufacturing of prestige is in fact nothing new for higher education institutions” (p.164). In addition, based on the researcher’s Osaka University case study, Ishikawa documents that prior to 2004, the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) university rankings, which contracted QS Quacquarelli Symonds Limited (QS) to undertake data collection, had no official contact with the aforementioned university. Instead, the survey had ended up, as it had for other Japanese universities, in its email spam box. Irrespective, these rankings are recognized, worldwide.

In this vein, the homogeneity of globalization is argued by some to be the biggest challenge to the homogeneous nature of Japan (Coleman, 2006; Ninoyama et al, 2009). Ishikawa (2009:165) maintains that the reality
facing global HE is painful for Japan as: “Long-cherished academic traditions that enabled national independence and self-sustenance are no longer valued in the way they once were under the emergence of dominant global models.” The ubiquity of global models, and the prominence of English in education and research, puts a spotlight on even the elite universities of Japan, confronting them with mammoth challenges to stay “competitive and relevant” - not only at the global level. Such prevalence of global hegemony models in HE, geared towards EMI, do provide some basis for Ishikawa (2009) indicating that as inside and outside pressures continue, internationalization will inevitably, willingly or unwillingly, cause Japanese universities to pursue these global measures. Ishikawa (2009:171) professes: “In the process, the traditional value bestowed on domestic higher education, the pre-existing national order, and power dynamics within universities begin to gradually be altered, which will have a lasting impact on national identity of Japanese universities.”

2.1 Global Hegemony: Japan’s idiosyncratic social demographics

The past decade has questioned the previous in regard to Japan’s independence. Ishikawa (2009:160) argues that the existence of Japan “outside the realm of Western higher education power domains, and Western university degrees” has been redefined in light of current sociopolitical, demographic and other social factors. Fujita-Round and Maher (2008:393) detail the emergence of new social factors, articulated by “a demographic ‘big bang’” which encompasses a declining population and the resultant influx of immigration. The growth of non-nationals they state is in response to the population decline and hence the need for imported labor to ensure the current social and economic system is maintained (2008:393). Such pressures are represented in diagrammatic form by Van Drom (2008) in
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Figure 1. Reapproachment between universities and private sector
(Van Drom, 2008:10)

(Fall in birthrate/ageing population/people’s dissatisfaction)

Demographic/ social factors

PRESSURE

UNIVERSITIES’ POLICIES TO SURVIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attract conventional students</th>
<th>Diversify channels</th>
<th>Outside means of financing</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum reform</td>
<td>a) Graduate schools</td>
<td>a) Industrialise knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Foreign students</td>
<td>b) Lifelong learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Continued education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Better education

Better research

a) Education completed at Graduation
b) More specialization

a) Joint research centres
b) Extension centres

INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS REQUESTS TO UNIVERSITIES

PRESSURE

Economic factors

(End of the bubble economy/globalization – computerization)
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Figure 1: pushing from the top down, with the external demographic/social factors, such as fall in birthrate/ageing population/people’s dissatisfaction, directly impacts universities’ policies to survive; and from bottom-up, the economic pressure that comes from factors which include globalization and computerization, are argued to impact industry and business requests to universities first.

3. Brief timeline of HE Internationalization and pre-2009 government initiatives in Japan

Ninomiya, et al (2009) documents that Japan has pursued international policies since the 1980s (Ninomiya, et al 2009), and Van Droom (2008) claims these were accelerated in the 1990s. In 1983, the Gaigokujin Ryugakusei plan was unveiled by the Prime Minister for the Committee of International Student Policies Toward the 21st Century (Ninomiya et al, 2009:120) to enroll 100,000 foreign students for study in Japan. From the 1980s to 2000, there were some significant characteristics displayed by these groups of international students. The first related to the incorporation of overseas development assistance through JICA, which resulted in foreign student policy being targeted more at developing nation students, though some highly specialized Japanologists were recruited from America and Europe. Secondly, non-government students were eventually considered part of short-term, non-degree student exchanges by national universities, as Japan was under pressure to recover the imbalance of Japanese students going to America (Ninomiya, et al, 2009). Ninomiya et al (2009:120) states that: “This foreshadowed the future demands for more liberal student mobility policies to respond to the demand from European students and later Australian students”.

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In this period, Japan “realized” that appealing to international students was attractive. Some contributing factors towards this conclusion were: Asian students were being recruited by Europe and the United States; submitting and receiving examination in English at the post graduate, PhD level was demanded; greater appreciation of ODA; and university mission statements recognized the value of internationalization via research, teaching and service. Although international students in Japanese society have not transited flawlessly, and professors were known to lament the extra work burden (as cited in Eibuchi, 1989 & Ninomiya, 2003); today, it appears that a key factor, at the heart of internationalizing Japan’s HE sector, still lies with the notion of attracting international exchange students. This has been pursued for the last 20 years, and came again to the forefront with the then 2007 Prime Minister announcing that high-quality student numbers be increased to 300,000 (Ninomiya, et al, 2008).

In 2009, there was a significant change in the Japanese political arena, whereby the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was defeated by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), the former having ruled more than half a century (Wikipedia, 2009). Hence, some education policies discussed in this paper at the time of publishing may have since become subject to scrutiny by the new administration. Unfortunately the DPJ manifesto, put out in pre-election stages, and expected to be followed up upon, makes no specific reference to university education. According to the manifesto, the only reference – unspecific at best – made in regards to internationalization and education can be found in Section II, Part 15, p. 27 of the English version which states: “Promote the establishment of centers involved in communication education, to produce creative people able to work in partnership with others of diverse values in the international community” (DJP, 2009).
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In order to recruit international students, the aim of the Asian Gateway Initiatives (Council for the Asian Gateway Initiatives, 2007), and the Government of Japan’s 2008 “Plan of 300,000 Foreign Students” tied to MEXT’s Special Committee of Foreign Students of the Central Council for Education, was to recruit 300,000 students by 2020. Other goals of the Asian Gateway Initiatives were set as tapping into 5-10% of international student mobility. Of further significance is the general argument that this policy is tailored to enhancing an “Open Japan” of elite students who are envisioned to remain in Japan, post graduation and contribute to companies. To which, The Immigration Bureau is predicted to closely monitor the issuance of study abroad visas to foreign students falling in this category (2003, 2005).

Regardless of whether or not these initiatives will remain on the current government’s agenda; Ninomiya et al’s (2009:123) conclusions that Japan is at a critical stage in HE, are still valid. Under the previous government, these researchers argued that Japan displayed “… its belief that a university will not attain global competitiveness and appear at the top of world league tables without an active and excellent foreign student population and similarly without an excellent Japanese student cohort who can be active in the world.”

4. Decreasing independence of Japan due to a global hegemony in HE?

In regards to approaches to internationalization, Yonezawa et al (2009), among other perspectives, introduces one of particular interest that applies to regionalization. Despite not delving extensively into this, some noteworthy points are raised that do provide potential platforms from which
further research can stem. To structure these points: Yonezawa et al (2009) have made a broad sweep of significant data collection conducted in other countries such as Germany, the USA, in regions of Europe and also South / East Asia (Korea, China, Taiwan); plus included an extensive reexamination of data collected by a Tohoku University survey questionnaire’s results published in 2008; have been highlighted. The general consensus after review of these international associations, or benchmarking organizations for universities of the authors is most significantly directed toward the trend of “global competitiveness” in the East Asian region; calling the alert that the focus on research and human resources is a trend of this region. Even so, they acknowledge their review is by no means complete and demand different interpretations of what internationalization means for HE stakeholders so that legitimate forms of comparison can be made across institutions with respect to their programs and missions.

For Japan in particular, Yonezawa et al (2009:129) surmises that it must be wary of the examples of success in HE internationalization; in doing so, a more comprehensive approach is favored which engenders input and output, educational exchange, as well as strives for excellence in research. This comparison is therefore argued to be central as: “Diversified approaches in other countries or regions pose a challenge to Japan to develop a comprehensive review for internationalization including assessments of the quality of student learning as well as research performance (Yonezawa, et al, 2009:129)”. When examining Japan in terms of the region in which it is located, it is currently grappling with the fact that its neighbors are thrusting it into a different geopolitical environment and their rapid industrialization and economic development clearly affects, and will continue to, the policy decisions made by the nation in order to maintain its quest of
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creating a leading knowledge based society (Ishikawa, 2009). Can the crucial dimensions of prestige and status in the global arena for Japan be kept when leading Japanese universities are struggling for identity definition (Ishikawa, 2009:160)? In truth, Japan’s independence is no longer fortified as the past decade has challenged it through “a number of sociopolitical, demographic, and economic factors, both local and global” (Ishikawa, 2009:160).

5. Japan and internationalization: Global 30 – a government initiative

Yonezawa et al (2009) support the arguments made in Ninomiya et al (2009) further extending on the then government projections for increasing international student numbers. That is, stating the 2020 goal of 300,000 as a significant jump from 2006 of 117, 927 in 2006 (CEFP, 2008: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Education [MEXT], 2007). Perhaps even more exacting is the discussion put forward by the CEFP (Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy (who established the 300, 000 target), calling for a “Global 30” out of the 756 universities in Japan to be selected for fostering internationalization (Yonezawa et al, 2009). Since the publication of Yonezawa et al’s 2009 article, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) has selected specific universities to carry out the Global 30 initiative. Although under the current administration of the DJP in Japan, it has not yet explicitly stated their stance on the pursuance or not of the “Global 30”; for all intents and purposes at this point in time, the initiative enacted under MEXT and other ministries of the previous administration appears to be very much “in progress”. In fact, under the JSPS, the Project for Establishing Core Universities for Internationalization (Global 30) awarded
in the academic year of 2009/2010 funding from 200–400 million yen per annum over a period of 5 years was given to the following 12 universities: Tohoku, Tsukuba, Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, Kyushu, Keio, Sophia, Meiji, Waseda, Doshisha and Ritsumeikan (JSPS, 2009) (see Appendix 1). They are to become global centers. In their role of leading Japanese universities to internationalization they are expected to “take the following steps to create an attractive educational and research environment for international students (adapted from MEXT, 2009)”:  

1) Expand the course programs which degrees can be obtained through English only classes.  
   - 33 undergraduate courses and 124 graduate courses over 4 years  
2) Enhance international student receiving/hosting procedures  
   - e.g. specialist support (studying and academic), on/off campus formalities, internships at Japanese companies  
3) Opportunities for learning Japanese language and culture  
4) Strategic international cooperation promotion  
   - establish two separate overseas offices per core university for recruitment and admissions tests, etc., and boost Japanese study abroad exchange numbers  
   - currently, ‘Shared Utilisation’ universities are set up in: Tunisia, Tunis/University of Tsukuba; Egypt, Cairo/Kyushu University; Germany, Bonn/Waseda University; Russia, Moscow & Novosibirsk/Tohoku University; India, New Delhi/ Ritsumeikan University; India, Hyderabad/ The University of Tokyo; Uzbekistan, Tashkent/ Nagoya University and Vietnam, Hanoi/ Kyoto University
5.1 Remaining multifaceted in Japanese HE: Are government initiatives long term orientated?


“...it should be noted that university internationalization is a multi-layered concept consisting of such diverse ideas as enhancing international exchanges of students and faculty members, making the campus a multilingual and multinational community, providing double degree programs, conducting and participating in international joint research projects, establishing and operating overseas offices, and improving international recognition and reputation. Therefore, internationalization is not something that all universities should pursue in unison but something that each university should address voluntarily, based on its characteristics.”


Yonezawa et al. (2009) picks up on the multilayered idea, construing it rather in terms of a multifaceted approach to internationalization where required. This is because of statements acknowledging, even though there are Japanese universities ranked in the top of the world, “many observers argue that, Japanese higher education institutions are not sufficiently internationalized” (Yonezawa et al., 2009:126). Moreover, Yonezawa et al (2009) specifies that government requirements for internationalization are obstructed by the lack of preparedness of academics and students alike regarding crucial objectives such as research exchange and even a
fundamental understanding of the true nature of the international HE setting. Due to this, they propose the idea that the acceleration of international education in Japanese HE may be propelled by incentives such as performance funding or internationalization budgeting. Yet on the other hand, caution that reliance on this type of assistance may work against the “sustainable development of multifaceted university internationalization” (Yonezawa et al, 2009:140).

Yonezawa et al (2009) argue emphatically that without a governmental approach that is multifaceted and directed towards the development of internationalization, meeting the highly complex and diversified needs of academics and students cannot be achieved. Furthermore, the ideal goal of universities and academics able to implement autonomous review and assessment of their position in regard to internationalization, which values “international exchange, mutual understanding, and mutual respect, should be widely shared by the efforts of the entire academic community”. Otherwise, “the superficial provision of “strategic planning” documents and data for participation in a domestic budgeting game will emerge” (Yonezawa et al, 2009). Hereby, a concerning flaw has been identified.

6. EMI

As Coleman (2006:2) cites Karchu’s (1992) documentation of the extent to which English would be used globally, having been predicted for the past 200 years, there has been heightened resistance due to issues of language death namely in the past 20. Yet, despite the problems of EMI (see Table 1), Coleman (2006) makes the case that it has been widely adopted.
6.1 EMI juxtaposed to multilingualism

If we take point in case of EMI, this paper can serve to show how approaches that do not entirely realize the complex nature of internationalization may in fact promote a global hegemony in Japanese HE approaches to English which may not result in an entirely positive outcome. English as a global lingua franca has been examined extensively by Phillipson (2009) in an article entitled, “English in Globalisation, a Lingua Franca or a Lingua Frankensteinia?” In coining the latter term, in part he has sought to shed
light on the ramifications of English being taught without considering local multilingual ecologies (p. 338). Indeed, EMI adoption is no light matter.

6.1.1 EMI juxtaposed to multilingualism: Europe

Multilingualism and pluralingualism are solid tenants of EU discursivity (Coleman, 2006). Coleman (2006) cites Byram’s (2004) reflections that English in Europe would not be acceptable as a Lingua Franca in the political arena, as social discourse is inefficient, and threatens to damage both identity and personal status. On the other hand, Byram (2004) acknowledges that “principle does not necessarily end in practice.” The contribution of Table 2 is believed not as significant without comparison to the presence or lack thereof of multilingualism; nevertheless, the ubiquity of EMI in HE is clear for both advanced and less advanced economies. (It is out of the scope of this paper’s argument to argue Europe’s situation.) And as Coleman’s 2006:1 article, English-medium teaching in European higher education stipulates, “English is progressively becoming the language of higher education in Europe”.

6.1.2 EMI juxtaposed to multilingualism: Japan

Japan has long been subject to misconceptions, lack of spoken English ability, poor pronunciation, and “othering” stereotypes to name a few (Kubota, 1998; Kanno, 2007). Although, Fujita-Round & Maher (2008:393) state that familiar modernist troupes underscoring Japan are monolingual and monocultural; they argue: “The truth of course lies elsewhere. Japan has been for many centuries, multilingual and multicultural (cited in Maher and Yashiro, 1995; Maher and MacDonald, 1995; Yamamoto, 2000; Sugimoto, 2003) due to migration to and from Japan, cultural flows, geographical realignment, the (Asian) colonial experience and so on.” Examples given
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total number of HE institutions</th>
<th>Number of HE institutions with programs taught in English</th>
<th>Rationales</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>10+</td>
<td>2,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2,3,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2,6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Czech</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic</td>
<td>Denmark 17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3,5,6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
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<td>France</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,5,6,7</td>
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</table>

which constitute part of the multilingual hybridity of Japan in the twenty-first century are: Japanese indigenous languages (Ainu and Ryukyuan), and older (Korean and Chinese) and newer immigrant languages (Portuguese, Spanish and Filipino) bought by foreign workers (Fujita-Round & Maher,
2008). Kanno (2007) further builds on the argument that Japan is multilingual and multicultural by documenting the commonality of Japanese citizens who spend periods of time abroad and return with proficiency in not only English but other languages as well. Moreover, the global city of Tokyo where cosmopolitan life and activities prevail contribute to this point in discussion (Kanno, 2007). Hence, multilingualism is an ever pervasive tennant.

6.2 EMI Asia: In brief

Unlike Europe, the countries of Asia should at best be examined on an individual basis, underscored by the lack of formal integration such as in the EU. The success or not of adopting EMI in Asia are mixed. Although there needs to be a much more extensive review of the literature to flesh out the true nature of the comparison between the EU and Asia; hence the following is merely a brief stub intended for seeding more comprehensive research projects in the future. Singapore is obviously a unique case, as English has been institutionalized and holds the status as an official language - the sole medium of instruction at all levels of education, and in effect is a daily working language claimed to enhance inter-ethnic and intra ethnic interaction (Rubdy et al., 2008:40). Conversely, more problematic examples, despite a post-colonial context of EMI remaining the main medium of instruction and assessment, proficiency levels of graduates have been dissatisfactory according to business sectors in Hong Kong (Evans & Green, 2007:4) with similar sentiments echoed by Macao (albeit their colonial history of Portuguese) (Yee & Young, 2006).
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6.3 EMI concerns: Japan

The EMI adoption debate is not one that can be taken likely, since it is a multifaceted concept in itself. This is further complicated by idiosyncrasies attached to Japan, Japanese identity, Japanese language and etcetera (Ishikawa, 2009) which presumably differ considerably from other Asian counterparts, and more so when compared to the EU. Ishikawa (2009: 165) laments the following:

“Since the late 19th Century, Japan has imported western knowledge, translated it into the Japanese language, and thus never relied on a foreign language as a medium for instruction from primary to tertiary levels of education. Rather than being celebrated as proof of its independence and success in developing domestic human resources, the practice of not hunting for foreign experts to fill available faculty position is now interpreted as an inability to attract international talent, thus negatively evaluated by ranking exercises. The predominance of Japanese as the medium of instruction, a symbol of cultural and linguistic autonomy, proves unpopular among prospective students especially in natural science and engineering, who increasingly demand English language courses and degree programs”.

Nonetheless, one serious concern for Japan is the advent of ‘Japan Passing’ which is reported to have been part of national discussions (Ishikawa, 2009). The government initiative to make Japan ‘The Asian Gateway’ in HE has been sidelined in favor of concentrating on the Global 30. Although, the number of Chinese students studying in Japan is greater than anywhere else in the world, it is of great concern that Chinese from leading universities are choosing to study in the US, followed by Britain and Canada – English
language universities; thus, the China Scholarship Council has reported initial projections of 10% have not been met. As Ishikawa (2009) frankly states, “the predominance of Japanese as the medium of instruction, a symbol of cultural and linguistic autonomy, proves unpopular among prospective students especially in natural science and engineering, who increasingly demand English-language courses and degree programs (p.165)”.

In this case, some legitimate discussion must be paid to the debate of adopting English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). Kuwamura (2009:195) argues that there is “strong potential for more English-medium programs to grow over the coming decade”, especially at the graduate level (MEXT, 2008). According to 2007 MEXT data results, prior to the announcement of the Global 30 in 2009, 30 national universities, 25 private universities, 1 municipal university and 81 postgraduate courses at 42 universities were classified as English medium universities (MEXT, 2007 as cited in Kuwamura, 2009:195). This argument has been furthered strengthened by the Core Universities for Internationalization, aforementioned (see section 5 – Global 30), who proactively pursue increasing the amount of degrees at both undergraduate and postgraduate conducted entirely in English. Despite these positive advancements, EMI remains problematic.

7. Discussion

As we have seen from Core Universities for Internationalization (Global 30), one core goal is to expand the number of degrees offered at undergraduate and post-graduate level: “Expand the course programs which degrees can be obtained through English only classes (33 undergraduate courses and 124
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graduate courses over 4 years). EMI as was shown by Table 1 is by no means a simple task to implement. Nonetheless, for all intents and purposes, it could be speculated that the Japanese government is doing its best to keep up its internationalization of HE, and through the appointment of the 13 core universities chosen by JSPS – constitute the core of the driving force to internationalize HE in Japan.

Thus Ishikawa’s (2009) notion of “manufactured” elitism of “world class” universities becomes more relevant; hence Japan succumbs to the Global Hegemony in HE, competing for positions in the top rankings list and striving to retain or improve their place annually. Undoubtedly, this has had a significant impact on Japan. In many senses, it could be argued that the government also means to select these core universities as a model for other universities in Japan to follow suit. However, what should be the approach taken for the internationalization of the other 743 universities not included in this group of 13? It could be argued that this plan may serve to promote the “international denominators” coined by Ishikawa that would inevitably “become more closely linked to “national hierarchy”” (Ishikawa, 2009: 169).

While in theory the EU has a multilingual and pluralingualist policy, the rapid advance of the global hegemony in English is proving difficult for Europe to resist. Global hegemonic indicators of “manufactured” or not elitism make it more difficult to resist following similar models and trends of internationalization and adopting full-scaled EMI degree programs in order to tap into the lucrative and mobile student global market. Can Japan resist, or assume a similar stance to that of the EU?

The regional position of Asia is strengthening. It is proposed here that
international students may not necessarily be looking for English degree programs (or on the other hand they may be). If cosmopolitanism is any indicator, it is likely that multilingualism will be a more succinct by-product of globalism than bilingualism in the future; and in light of this argument, focusing on EMI could serve merely short-term goals. Notably since Japan has unique facters, that is the social issues that pressure it as in Van Drom’s (2008) diagrammatic depiction (see Figure 1); obviously Japan, is in an even more precarious position when compared to other nations or regions due to sheer demographics — a declining population.

How relevant then is EMI to the internationalization of HE in Japan, if one considers multilingualism in a country plagued by a declining population? It is asserted the EMI is a reactive internationalization policy that serves to meet short term goals, while multilingualism adherence would be proactive and visionary in terms of foreseeing future global or regional hegemonic linguistic models emerge. It is unlikely that, with foresight, the government’s Global 30, which succumbs to current Global hegemonic trends, and which strictly pursues bilingualism will be attractive enough to the students of the near future who pursue global citizen notions.

8. Conclusion

Japan is acutely aware that we are in the era of globalization, and that the HE industry is not isolated from this movement. The main point of concern as Yonezawa et al. (2009) has already discussed, is that financial incentives provided to universities in Japan, may override the need for the approach to HE internationalization to recognize the complex nature of this evolving process as being multifaceted. In doing so, the complexities of HE
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internationalization would be inevitably overlooked for short-term gain. In other words, is following the current global EMI hegemony at HE institutions in Japan more important than future foresights of multilingualism?

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**Appendix:**

Kristie Sage

Assistance for the Internationalization of Universities Launching the Project for Establishing Core Universities for Internationalization (Global 30). Accessed on 1st December, 2009 at:
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Press Release

Prioritized Financial Assistance for the Internationalization of Universities
Launching the Project for Establishing Core Universities for Internationalization (Global 30)

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has launched the "Global 30" Project for Establishing Core Universities for Internationalization, for the purpose of selecting universities that will function as core schools for receiving and educating international students. In 2009, thirteen universities were selected. These core universities will play a major role in dramatically boosting the number of international students educated in Japan as well as Japanese students studying abroad.

1. What is the Global 30 Project for Establishing Core Universities for Internationalization?

Japan formulated the 300,000 International Students Plan in July of 2008, with the aim of receiving 300,000 international students by 2020. The "Global 30" Project for Establishing Core Universities for Internationalization is being implemented to realize this goal by selecting measures for the internationalization of universities including the recruitment of international students, along with forming Japan’s centers of internationalization. Selected universities will receive prioritized financial assistance of 200 to 400 million yen per annum over the next 5 years. Endowed with this aid, each university will strive to recruit 3000 to 8000 international students.

2. Thirteen Universities to Lead Japan’s Internationalization!

In 2009, the following 13 universities were selected as global centers:
Tohoku University, University of Tsukuba, The University of Tokyo, Nagoya University, Kyoto University, Osaka University, Kyushu University, Keio University, Sophia University, Meiji University, Waseda University, Doshisha University, and Ritsumeikan University

3. Action Plans for the Core Universities!

Core universities will take the following steps to create an attractive educational and research environment for international students.
1) Expansion of course programs by which degrees can be earned through English-only classes
   ⇒ Establish courses at the universities selected through which English-only degrees can be obtained: 33 undergraduate courses and 124 graduate courses over the next 5 years
2) Enhancement of systems for receiving/hosting international students
   ⇒ Enhance systems for receiving/hosting international students, such as specialist support in studying and academics, as well as for completing various procedures and formalities both in/out of the university; and provide internship programs at Japanese corporations, etc.
3) Provide international students with opportunities to learn about Japanese language and culture
   ⇒ A plan to provide high-quality instruction in Japanese language and culture
4) Promotion of strategic international cooperation
   ⇒ Establish two separate overseas offices per core university, to enable local recruitment through admissions tests, etc., and boost the number of Japanese students studying abroad through exchange study programs, etc.
Establish an "Overseas Office for Shared Utilization by Universities" as the liaison for Study in Japan! Upon completion, these offices will provide comprehensive information on Japanese universities overall, including intake seminars, admission tests, etc.

Tunisia (Tunis) [University of Tsukuba], Egypt (Cairo) [Kyushu University], Germany (Bonn) [Waseda University], Russia (Moscow, Novosibirsk) [Tohoku University], India (New Delhi) [Ritsumeikan University], India (Hyderabad) [The University of Tokyo], Uzbekistan (Tashkent) [Nagoya University], Vietnam (Hanoi) [Kyoto University].

*The name in the [ ] indicates the operating university. For information on details of office preparation, please contact the corresponding university.

Overseas Office for Shared Utilization by Universities

Germany (Bonn): Waseda University

Russia (Moscow, Novosibirsk): Tohoku University

Uzbekistan (Tashkent): Nagoya University

India (New Delhi): Ritsumeikan University

Vietnam (Hanoi): Kyoto University

Egypt (Cairo): Kyushu University

India (Hyderabad): The University of Tokyo

Tunisia (Tunis): University of Tsukuba

Please refer to attached reference materials for detailed plans of the core universities, as well as their contact information.